



STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0001

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI  
GOVERNOR

June 25, 2003

Dear Administrator:

As you are likely aware, the State of Maine has received significant funding from the federal Department of Homeland Security to promote first responder preparedness and to help defray the costs associated with increased security at critical infrastructure points during periods of recent heightened security alert.

It is clear to me that improving Maine's communication's network, with an eye towards widespread interoperability, is an important Homeland Security issue for all of us. Regrettably, our current system is old and in need of substantial improvement to promote better communication for all levels of government. This is a weak link in our security infrastructure.

My Administration has placed a high priority on strengthening regionalization and communication between Maine municipalities. Indeed, the administering agency for this grant, Maine Emergency Management Agency, has worked hard to allocate grant funds in a responsible manner with the intent of encouraging cooperation and regionalization between communities. I was pleased to learn that MEMA's funding allocations resulted in 55% of funds going to individual localities and 45% intended for County and regional based activities. The intent of targeting funding to the County and regional pools is to reward communities that work together for the good of several towns rather than protecting their separate interests.

Where communications equipment and regional cooperation may be Maine's greatest weakness in emergency preparedness, this grant provides the best combination of spending flexibility to further the State's vision and homeland security strategy. In planning for the use of these important funds, I would strongly encourage Maine communities to begin exploring new and innovative partnerships that can enhance both communications and emergency response on a regional or multi-jurisdictional basis.

I believe it in the best interests of the people of Maine to apply at least half of these homeland security grant funds toward interoperable communications gear that will benefit a wide range of jurisdictions in all kinds of emergencies. This application of funding would have statewide implications, and significantly improve response and preparedness for disasters beyond terrorist events.

I see these efforts as a critical step in providing leadership and cost savings among Maine communities. By working together we can help to stretch these federal dollars to their limit, simultaneously providing better protection and fiscal responsibility to Maine taxpayers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John E. Baldacci", written over a printed name and title.

John E. Baldacci  
Governor